

These rooms, opening on the front of the house along the corridor, do not run the full length of the house. A fourth, a back room, running across the back part may open on to the kitchen. Sometimes this room is only roughly finished and used for storage or sleeping purposes or both. A grandmother often takes the grandchildren (other than the infant) to bed with her in this room.

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The kitchen is set off from the rest of the house by being on a lower level, perhaps one step. The kitchen usually has a hard dirt floor. Occasionally it is cemented. Sometimes it has a chimney, sometimes a hole in the side of the wall, which the curious smoke rejects in favor of a leisurely diffusion throughout the other rooms of the house. The kitchen is not part of the house in the sense that the other rooms are. The shoes are not removed when entering it. The kitchen opens out on to a stone or dirt path. Women frequently still eat in the kitchen because of its convenience and the need of going in and out to get water, or to wash vegetables, or to get food from the shed during the preparation of a meal.

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The stove is basically an open hearth with a hole at the top for the cooking pan. There is also a hole directly below this into which the fuel can be placed. More elaborate stoves may have three tiers: one for the cooking, one for putting the fuel in, the lower for the ashes. The most simple, in the very poorest houses, are little more than a circular group of stones laid on the ground built up so that a pan can be placed on top. The most elaborate, made of stone, might run across the width of the kitchen and have several openings. Fuel, such as odd branches, sticks of firewood brought from the northern (Kunigami) region, crushed and dried sugar cane, or miscanthus grass of varying length is put part way into the fire and pushed further in as the ends are burned off.

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The all stone house is smaller than the wooden house. It invariably has a tile roof, for those able to afford the stone can also buy the tile. The stone blocks used in house construction are usually about nine feet by one foot on the edge.⁶ The stones used as posts are buried two feet in the ground leaving seven feet for the upright. These blocks, called ishibashida when used for house construction, have the same width and breadth; they can be cut to any desired length to even off the sides. The stones are layed like bricks with mortar to form the walls of the house. The all stone house is not common, and is usually seen in the south, where the stone is quarried, in Minatogawa, and in adjacent villages. These houses are more modern, and often bathing facilities are built in. The stone house has the advantage of being cool in summer, warm in winter.

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Finally, there are the simple structures, resembling shacks or shanties more than houses. These are, as one would expect, more frequent in the areas of the war's operations. There are three main varieties, though the combinations are numerous: (1) the all grass house, now uncommon. The sides of this wattled house are usually of

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⁶ Actually they are 9 x 1 x 1 shaku. A shaku is 0.994 feet.

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The first naming of children is done at a ceremony on the day of birth, or on the following day, if the birth took place at night. It is known as unbagi. There is a small gathering of relatives. Soup, rice, and a little sake may be served. Ordinary rice or rice cakes (mochi) may be prepared and put on the Buddhist god shelf. If a boy, the relatives and parents pray for his strength, if a girl for her good health. Unbagi, an Okinawan word, is also known as sūchūsan no iwai (Japanese). The ceremony precedes the burying of the afterbirth.

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One important element in the naming of a child on its day of birth is the state of the tide. The child is named only if the tide is coming in. It is not necessary that the tide be high. Perhaps midpoint is the best, though high tide is considered good. Practically everyone can calculate the time when the tide is coming in or out, since they all know the lunar calendar with a cycle completed in 15 days, it is a simple calculation.⁶ The explanation always given for calculating the tide on this and other occasions is that when the tide is coming in, fortune and happiness will enter in the new life or the new situation. When the tide is ebbing, everything goes out and away.

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The real celebration of the birth of a child occurs several days after birth. It usually occurs on the 5th or 6th day counting the birth day. This is known as mansan (Okinawan) and is in honor of the good health of the mother and the child. In Japanese, it is also called muikajari.⁷ In all communities studied, the week long all night celebration has disappeared, though the celebration of mansan might last well into the night.

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One celebration, observed in Minatogawa, is probably typical of the thousands that take place every year in rural Okinawa. The guests came early in the evening to the parents' home, or, as in this case, to the home of the child's grandfather, since the father, a first son, lived in his parents' home. The men sat in the first room (ichibanza), the women in the second (nibanza), following custom in parties in which both sexes are present. The head of the house, the grandfather, sat in front of the alcove (tokonoma) of the first room. The child's father sat next to him. Each guest went on his knees, bowed, congratulated the father and presented him with a small money gift. The usual gift is about ¥20. This was accepted by the father, who then responded with a short speech. Sometimes these are formal and stiff, sometimes like a simple conversation. The guests also congratulated the

6 The method of computing times of high and low tide will be given later. The tide is important in the marriage ceremony, when moving into a new house, or when moving, in the case of a second or succeeding son, from a main house to establish a branch family, and at a child's party on the first anniversary of its birth.

7 The day was variously given me as 4-5th, 6th, and 7th day after birth. Muka in muikajari means 6th day.

mother, for example, fed her child rice gruel (Okayū) at eight months and at the age of one year the child began eating sweet potatoes. By the time the child is ready to walk and play, he often carries with him a piece of sweet potato, and, in season, a piece of sugar cane.

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A party is held on the first birthday anniversary of the child. This is more elaborate than the one which honored his birth. Birthdays are not celebrated each year. After the first anniversary, the next are on the 13th, 25th, 37th, 49th, and 61st birthdays, that is, at twelve year intervals.

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The party for the first birthday of a child is particularly tender and affectionate. At one year, he can walk or stumble, and answer or smile to the calls of his parents and grandparents. He can pick up things, throw them, and make his presence felt. The exhibition of these skills becomes part of the celebration. It is customary to invite both relatives and friends, who bring a small money present, from ¥20 which is usual to ¥100 which is uncommon.

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During the party, the child is given several symbolic gifts. These are placed on a low table in the middle of the room which the child can easily walk to and reach. Usually the gifts are a book, a fountain pen (or a writing brush, fude), an abacus (soroban), and a stack of paper money. These symbolize the wish that the child will become proficient in learning, writing, counting and mathematics, and will become rich. The child is eagerly watched as he unsteadily toddles to the table to see which article he picks up first. While the act is not taken seriously, the article which the child picks up first is supposed to indicate the field of endeavor in which he will be most fortunate.

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These parties, small or large, include men, women, and children, but the majority of the guests usually are men. After the child has gone to bed, the party continues. In more formal and larger parties, the guests first come up to the father, go on their knees, bow, and make a short speech of congratulation. Sometimes these speeches sound as if they are prepared beforehand, other times as if they are spoken spontaneously. There is an exchange of sake between the father and his guest, both sipping from the same cup, the usual custom. The mother and the female relatives during this time are in the kitchen preparing the food.

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Women sit by themselves. This is true of all celebrations when the sexes are together. Women do not drink. (In a similar party near Matsuda, the old women--usually over 60--drank a little). The jolly old women also love to dance solos in the traditional style. They dance with grace and vigor. The evening progresses without any planned entertainment. There is talking and drinking, singing, and samisen playing. Men, with a repertoire of Okinawan songs, sing in

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Husband and wife usually are from the same village, but there are many exceptions. Marriages of persons from different villages have increased in the past decade. This probably should be ascribed to the greater mobility of the people and to the acceptance of free choice in marriage. It is common, for example, for a Matsuda boy to marry a Ginoza village girl. It is also common for a boy in Minatogawa to marry a girl from the nearby agricultural villages of Hanashiro, Asato, or Gushichan. This apparently is a distinct change from earlier practices.

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If the family registers are accurate, the great majority of the men living in a village were born there; it is the wives who are more likely to be newcomers. In the social structure of village life, it is the men who provide the continuity; the women are more likely to be strangers. The husband may point to his father and grandfather who live or have lived in the village; fewer wives can do the same.

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The Marriage Ceremony

In my experience, no two marriage ceremonies in Okinawa are alike. Marriages take place at any time of the year, but in all three villages, they were more commonly held in the late fall or in winter. The reasons given are that the heavy clothing and elaborate headdress of the bride are not suited to the hot and humid summer and that these can be more comfortably worn in the cool winter months. The marriage feast with its fish cakes, meats, vegetables, and a variety of other perishable foods can be more easily prepared and kept in winter. In the agricultural villages, the ceremony usually takes place after the day's work; in the winter the reception may start by 5 and the main ceremonies are over by 8 in the evening.

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Description of a ceremony at Matsuda. The party began about 5 in the afternoon. Because of the large number of guests, the primary school was used for the ceremony. At the head of the first room, the grandfather and grandmother of the groom, the groom, his father, and the go-between were seated. Other relatives of the groom found places around the sides. Later the father of the bride, who arrived shortly before his daughter, joined this group. The go-between, a young man of 24, was a friend of the couple, and his wife was a member of the groom's family.

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In the other rooms, opening into one another, about 300 guests, mostly men, were assembled. During the reception and before the beginning of the ceremony, guests representing their families entered the first room to congratulate the father, the groom, and the grandparents. In this period of congratulation involving the father, the groom, and the guest, there was an exchange of sips of sake from a common cup. As in other instances of congratulation, some speeches were long, some short, some well prepared, others extemporaneous.

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585 During his speech, the guest remained in the most polite kneeling
596 position, resting his weight on the heels with the toes pointed
downward toward the floor. His head was bowed during the talk. The
father and the groom acknowledged the compliments by nodding their
heads and then made their responses.

When these preliminaries were almost over, an uproar followed
the announcement that the bride was arriving. The lights of a vehicle
could be seen from a distance. It turned out to be a truck. In
former days, the bride came in greater style: she either walked pre-
ceded by young boys bearing lanterns or rode in a palanquin (kago),
[493] or in a specially decorated horse cart.

All Okinawan brides, from the time they enter the house of the
groom until they leave shortly after the completion of the ceremony,
have an expression of indescribable gloom. The bride's face is set.
Her eyes are downcast. She takes no notice of the guests, and responds
silently to the acts which convention demands. She never smiles. This
is a very serious occasion and any show of lightheartedness is considered
in poor taste. The groom is not so wooden as he awaits his bride and
goes through the ceremony.

585 The bride is dressed in a Japanese costume. She has a wig, usually
[292] rented for the occasion, the traditional Japanese headdress with masses
[177] of stiff lacquered hair. It is heavy and bulky and the need of keeping
it on straight may account for some of the bride's immobility. She
also has a bright colored Japanese style kimono with sash (obi) which
may be her own, her mother's, or grandmother's. The bride's face is
heavily powdered with white powder and this makes her face look like
[302] a mask. Her lips, reddened slightly, accentuate the unnatural white-
ness of the face. The groom is simply dressed in a black silk kimono.

The ceremony of san-san-kudo (literally, 3, 3, 9 times) conducted
by the go-between then began. It is so called because both of the
principals drink 3 times from each of three different cups which are
made in progressively smaller sizes so that they fit into one another.
There are variations, both in the way in which the 9 sips are taken
and in the cups used. Since the war, the special sets of three cups
have disappeared from many homes, and three small sake cups may be
used. In this ceremony, the go-between served the first cup to the
groom who took 3 sips, the go-between then refilled for the bride who
took 3 sips. The other two cups were presented to each principal in
the same way. This ceremony was very short, lasting only as long as
it takes to sip the drinks in the proper order. When the marriage
ceremony (kaidonshiki) was over, the bride and the groom arose and
went to the front part of the room to be presented to the guests.

585 The bride retained her sad immobility. This is all the more
596 remarkable to see when one knows the bride in daily life, vivacious
and jolly and anything but impassive. The groom allowed himself a
little more naturalness. The go-between spoke to the guests briefly
about the couple. He told where the bride and groom were born, the

date of their birth (using the Japanese reign date), where they had gone to school and their present occupations. This was done separately for each. After this was over, the bride and groom stood silently and politely, but without outward expression, while three guests in turn, previously chosen, made speeches, offering their congratulations and best wishes. On this particular occasion, the principal of the school at which the bride was teaching, the principal of the school at which the groom was a teacher, and a mutual friend of the couple spoke.

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These proceedings do not receive the undivided attention of the guests who have been drinking sake for some time. On the tops of the tables, dancing in the traditional Okinawan manner and the accompanying singing have begun. The dances and songs, usually performed by men in their forties and fifties, were done with grace. These are part of all social gatherings of any consequence.

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The sober attitudes of the work day are cast aside. The best clothes have been put on. There is a great contrast between the barefooted partially clothed farmer or fisherman of the daytime and his appearance at social occasions. These events are conducted with dignity and poise, at least until the sake consumption has risen to a high point. The party then becomes a noisy melee of dancing, singing, and talking, but without quarrelling or fighting. There is little self-consciousness in entertaining others. Talented guests do not have to be cajoled into performing. Dancing, singing, and samisen playing continue spontaneously, with another performer beginning after one has finished. The wedding party lasts from about 5 to 8, but many of the guests stay much later until the sake is gone.

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Following the san-san-kudo, another but more private ceremony took place while the guests were entertaining themselves. In the wedding room, colored cakes and tea were placed on a small table. The female relatives of the bride and groom, mothers and sisters mostly, sat opposite one another and ate cakes and drank the tea together. This ceremony indicated the willingness of the bride's family to give up the daughter, and of the groom's family to receive her. After this ceremony, the bride's gifts from her parents were carried in. These vary with the family's wealth. In this case, they were a chest of drawers, a mirror, a heavy comforter, pillows, and a mosquito net. Before the war, gifts were more lavish than now. The usual presents now are a large chest of drawers (tansu), two heavy quilts or comforters (futon), a mirror (kagami), two Japanese type pillows (makura), and a large mosquito net (kaya). A poor family would be most likely to omit the chest of drawers. A new kimono and money may be included.

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A Y20 note is the usual gift of an ordinary guest at a wedding. Closer friends will give about Y100. There is no uniform practice about gifts from the groom's to the bride's family. About Y1000 may be presented prior to marriage. The bride's family uses the money to purchase the wedding gifts.

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The day following the marriage, there is another ceremony, this

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ceremony the set of three cups (sakasuki) was used. The go-between, a man and a close friend of the groom, poured sake into the cup. The groom drank; the go-between then refilled the cup, giving it to the bride. The same procedure was repeated with the remaining two cups.

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In this ceremony, after the san-san-kudo, the go-between dipped a pair of chopsticks into salt, putting a bit on the open palm of the bride who then put the salt in her mouth. This was repeated for the groom. The go-between then dipped his finger into a cup of water, touching first the forehead of the bride, then that of the groom.

The presentation of the newly married couple to the guests was also done in a different way. Because of his close friendship with the groom's father, the mayor of the township introduced the bridal pair to the guests. This was a tender and affectionate speech in which the mayor told of the birthplaces of the young man and his bride. He asked the guests, as friends and relatives of the new couple, to teach them how to live well together, how to make a living, and ended by asking everyone present to have a good time. The celebration, the sake drinking, the dancing following the ceremony were essentially the same as in Matsuda. A ring was not used in either ceremony. When used, it is ordinarily given to the bride, not placed on her finger as part of the ceremony.

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A custom followed in Minatogawa illustrates a variation in the preliminaries before the marriage ceremony. The groom (hanamuko) and the go-between or a friend go to the bride's home. They are given refreshments. The groom acknowledges his bride. He returns to his home to await her coming. This may take some time if the tide is not right. Before the war children from 7 to 10 years of age carried long lanterns (chūchin) with candles to light the way for the bride, as she walked to the groom's house. Each child carried two lanterns, which they held very tightly, as it was considered bad luck for them to change from one hand to the other. The lanterns have now been abandoned (when the ceremony is performed) in favor of flashlights, in another triumph of the Industrial Revolution. But the children enjoyed participating because they were given small amounts of money and food.

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In the Minatogawa custom, everyone stepped over the threshold. Even now, if houses do not have one, a long step is made from the outer stone or ground into the room. Among the guests, there is usually a joker who humorously announces in a loud voice the arrival of the bride.

In Minatogawa, the groom's family presents a gift of about ¥5-6000 to the bride's family. (This family would have to be in moderate circumstances to do this). Gifts from the guests are from ¥20-40. The groom's friends may give money to the groom's parents to defray the heavy expenses of the banquet, and the girl's friends give money to her, presumably for the purchase of wedding articles.

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There is one further variation in a custom from Hanashiro. On

515 the Japanese style public bath at Minatogawa. There are separate rooms for men and women. The body is soaped; then the soap is washed off. One gets into the hot watertub to soak. In this arrangement, all the advantages lie with the first comers. In the winter, the Minatogawans use their public bath houses. But in the summer, they soap themselves thoroughly and rinse off under a public faucet, keeping on a pair of shorts or a light skirt, depending on sex. In Matsuda, an outside tub is frequently used. This is bullet shaped, about three feet in diameter and about the same depth. Generally it has a rudely constructed roof. The bath water, not so hot as the Japanese like it, is only moderately warm.

• [576] In family tub bathing, there is an order in which the bath is taken. Guests are first, followed by the head of the house, then by other males in order such as first, second, or third sons, and finally the women of the house, starting with the eldest. Many people in Matsuda go, usually about once a week, to the neighboring village of Ginosza for their bath.

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Hair Styles

302 [175] In the days of the old kingdom, men and boys wore the hair long. A patch on the crown was shaved, and the long glossy hair was gathered on all sides and made into a tight knot and pinned with two hair pins. Satow mentions that between the ages of 16 and 19 the ceremony of *genbutsu* took place. The central part of the head was shaven, and the long hair was then put up. According to this author, the custom dated back two centuries.² Various oils were used on the long hair to keep it in place. This hair dress for men and boys was described by Basil Hall in 1816; Commodore Perry's staff made similar observations, and the reports of Furness (1896) and Simon (1910) indicated that there had been no changes in the style.

The cutting of men's hair is said to have begun about 40 years ago. While some thought the Japanese forced this, it seems to have been done voluntarily. A high school principal, now in his late forties, told me of his childhood remembrance of crying at seeing his young father willingly shearing off his own long and luxuriant hair.

[177] The clipped (*narugari*) head for young boys is a Japanese introduction. It was required for health reasons by the Japanese school teachers. The clipped cut, for young boys, has persisted, and it is

2 Satow, E. M. Notes on Loochoo. Transactions of the Asiatic Society of Japan, 1 (1882), 1-8.

273 the greater part of the following day until the effects are worn off.^h

There is tolerance of drinking and of behavior while under the influence of alcohol—with the exceptions to be discussed below. This nonchalance extends to children and young people. When an elder and highly respected friend or neighbor, perhaps their own grandfather, is drunk, they laugh indulgently at him, passing off his behavior as foolish because he is drunk.

• [576] The custom of drink exchange (kempai) certainly does not keep drinking to a minimum. Drink exchange is perpetual at parties. A small cup of sake is offered to a friend. He drinks, gives the cup back to his friend who holds it while the other refills the cup. The exchange goes on again. Often three or four men are involved in this reciprocity.

[272] Drinking, like an aperitif or cocktail before a meal, is not common. Sake may be drunk with or after the meal. Often it is served along with tea. Throughout the evening the two may be drunk alternatively. In this case, the tea is served first. Unless there are special occasions, there is very little day time drinking.

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562 In this drinking, the Okinawan woman has no part. There are a few minor exceptions. But in all the villages these exceptions were older or very elderly women. The young wife or girl in rural Okinawan villages simply does not drink. Furthermore, she seems to have no desire to. Occasionally a woman in her late forties or early fifties takes a few sips. In the southern villages, an old woman may drink a small amount with a little added sugar at a celebration. In Matsuda, shortly before New Years it is customary to give a party at village expense to all people in the village over 70 years of age. On this occasion, both the old men and old women are liberally supplied with and liberally drink the sake.

[888] These distinctions in drinking between the sexes, in my opinion, are closely tied in with the responsibilities of men and women, as they have grown up historically under the family system. The distinctions certainly cannot be explained in terms of contemporary attitudes. If [154] drinking is an outlet for the tensions of the men, a way of relieving the boredom and monotony of every day life, how can one explain the

h There is little real violence or fighting, but there may be noisy quarrels and some shoving about. Some mild men become very quarrelsome. The only instance of violence I observed was the case of a young man about 25 who drank quite a lot, became angry with some girls in the Young Women's Association for not doing chores he thought they were responsible for. He slapped one severely. The following day he was very remorseful. His mother went to the girl's house and personally apologized for the boy's behavior.

871 and the more advanced the school, the truer this is. Friendships
 572 are made early with children of nearby villages. Marriage may be
 the result of early school acquaintance, encouraged by the acceptance
 of free choice in marriage. A young adult has a scattering of friend-
 ships in the villages of his township. These class friendships are
 strong in school, in the teens, and early twenties. By the late
 twenties, the circle of friendships has broadened.

182 One of the most significant links between the family, village,
 526 and school is the annual athletic meet (undōkai). It is held in the
 fall. Preparations for this event are long and involve almost every-
 body.⁵

526 About a month before it is held, the meet is the topic of
 [875] innumerable conversations. School children practice singing and
 [534] athletic dancing drills at home. School teachers, who do most of the
 organizational work, practice with painful cacophony on their trumpets and
 clarinets. On the streets and lanes of Minatogawa, young men from 17
 to 23 practice broad jumping late into the night. Shortly before the meet,
 all normal school activities stop. The teachers paint signs, mimeograph
 programs, and plan the order of the various events. The school officials
 have interminable committee meetings.

[262] There is much bustle, laundering, hair washing, and cooking in a
 village the day before the meet. Special lunches including rice dyed
 red, bean curd, slices of fish paste, beef or pork are prepared. This
 field day is the closest approach to a picnic the Okinawans experience.

In good weather, the meet has a large attendance. A reserved area,
 with school desks and chairs is set aside for special guests. A person
 entering the reserved section to take his seat bows to the mayor and the
 group, steps forward a few paces, bows again, and takes his seat.

• [576] The mayor of the township presides over the meeting relieved by the
 vice-mayor or other school or village or township officials. On one day
 of the autumn meet, the mayor remained seated throughout the morning
 and afternoon in a drizzling rain. It was his duty, assisted by the
 principal and the teachers of the school, to give out the prizes.

Relay races, girls' dances, races and dashes for various age groups
 are endless. At present, the meeting is not confined to school children,
 but the younger men and women are included as well. The Young Men's
 Association is very active. Special events are included. In the Women's
 Association event, there was a mother and child race. In one case, a
 mother who entered the race with a child on her back and her young son as

[119] 5 These remarks are based on observations in Minatogawa, Gushichan, and
 Hanashiro villages, and on attendance at the Gushichan meet in Novem-
 ber 1951. From discussions, I am certain they are very similar in
 Matsuda, in fact all over the island.

a running mate was vigorously applauded. The infant on her back was sleeping!

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Four teams, the village officials, the teachers, high school students, and members of the Young Men's Association competed in a relay race. Later the teachers, and the mayor, participated in a rope and loop race. A rope about 20 feet long was tied to a stake driven in the ground. On the other end of the rope was a large loop. The trick is to run from a starting point, put the loop over the head, let it drop down and then step out. In the meantime, the opposing team has been trying to prevent the player from getting the loop by jerking the rope away, or throwing it at a distance. Other comedy events based on groping blindfolded to selected goals or objects were part of the program.

The races produce the greatest excitement, especially in the inter-village competition. A team from each village competes in a relay and runners representing their village participate in various dashes. In these competitive events, the old women become very excited,

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On this occasion the township gives a present to all people present who are 70 years old or over. The gift is now a plain towel; formerly the towel was embroidered with characters expressing wishes for a long life, but this practice has been abandoned for reasons of economy.

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The prizes, presented by the mayor to the contestants, are modest and generously given. The young men get four cigarettes, the women a paper of tooth powder, and the children, small school notebooks. The prize winners line up; each one steps up, makes a bow, receives his prize, lifts it up slightly, a typical Okinawan gesture of thanks noted by Basil Hall in 1816, bows again and retires.

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Though it centers around the school, the athletic meet is one of the strong forces bringing both families and village communities together. It would be hard to exaggerate the interest in the meet or the work that goes into its preparation. The fact that the mayor of the township, his staff, the village headmen, the principals of high schools, every parent and all the children who could possibly come, were present is enough to show its importance and vitality.

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as usual. It was an affair organized by the women leaders, which, though a little slow in starting, turned into a gay carousing for the older women, who were less inhibited than the younger ones and needed little encouragement to drink and dance. 562 575 [888]

The daily life of a woman is more monotonous than her husband's and she has less leisure and recreation. After a day of hard work, men sit down alone or in groups to spend the evening in relaxation with a bottle of sake. After a short time they show signs of pleasant intoxication and all burdens of life seem to disappear. Such recourse to care-free diversion is generally denied women. Instead, they are loaded down with household chores and care of infants and guests after a day of work in fields and forests. They spend their little free time exchanging news with other women or talking with other family members or visitors who assemble around the charcoal fire in the back room during winter evenings. Only women of advanced age feel free to join the men in drinking at home. 562 512 [273] [273] [888]

Men have greater sexual freedom. They are at liberty to have affairs with other women outside the village and on trips to the city may visit tea houses and afterwards enjoy the favors of a prostitute if their pocket books allow. 562 837

Status differences based on age are reflected in the social structure and clearly denoted in the kinship terms. There is a special term of reference and address for "first son" and "first daughter" and for "older brother" and "older sister." As mentioned, ideally the oldest son assumes responsibility for the household, for his parents, and for the ancestral tablets. Even if he leaves his parental home temporarily or permanently for the city, where economic prospects are better, he remains the nominal household head and sends money back to his family. Theoretically the oldest male may retain authority until death, although in practice most men retire from this position at the age of 61. Their retirement is made official by an entry in the population registry. They continue to live with their oldest son and act as advisors and critics. A man's loss of authority with age occurs around his late fifties and early sixties and is evidenced not only by his retirement but also by his loss of the right to vote in village meetings. Veneration for age itself therefore, does not exist. Actual behavior toward the grand-parental generation, all the members of which are addressed as "grand-mother" or "grandfather" regardless of actual kinship, is warm, mildly playful, and indulgent. Disrespect, however, is absent. 561 554 593 887 561 554 [596] [576]•

It is characteristic of the relationship between children and grand-mothers that in addressing nonrelated old women, the suffix *-san*, which denotes respect, is most often dropped for the "grandmother" 603 601

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603 term. As the child gets older, the familiar suffixless form of address is
601 used less and less frequently, though girls seem to retain it longer than boys.

601 The strength of one's ties to the community as a whole regardless of
156 actual kinship is seen not only in the use of the term "grandmother"
576 and "grandfather" in addressing all members of this generation but also in the similar use of the terms "uncle" and "aunt" for all members of the parental generation. Those who are not known well or who have high status are addressed by the appropriate kinship term with the suffix -san added.*

554 Achieved status is recognized by special terms of address. The teacher,
576 school principal, the doctor, the village headman or mayor are addressed by their titles. Taira people combine familiarity with formality by calling a young teacher from the same or neighboring community by the first name, then adding the title "teacher." †

621 In summary, although affiliation with a patrilineal descent group
156 and kinship ties with kindred influence certain aspects of life, over and
571 above these ties is the identification with the community, which is drawn together by bonds of economic and social interdependence. Individual leaders serve their term of responsibility and then return to the egalitarian community life, which is comparatively free of competitive strife.

[157]



Chapter 7

Courtship, Marriage, and Sex

582 Most marriages in Taira take place when both men and women are in their early or middle twenties (see Table 2). It is perhaps most note-

* This refers to the use of Japanese kinship terms which are prevalent in Taira—see Chapter 1, p. 370.

† The use of first names may also help to identify individuals since many persons have the same surname—this explanation, however, is not in contradiction with the statement concerning familiarity.

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872 express one's creativeness except in perfecting and improvising song-
876 dance performances. Lacking paper and crayons or paint, children
crouch to the ground with the teacher to trace "pictures" in the sandy
ground with their fingers or small sticks. The beach provides a rich
playground on days when the teacher suffers laryngitis as a result of a
cold and is unable to lead songs and direct the play verbally. Collect-
ing shells, learning their names, examining washed up bits of seaweed
and fish, exploring exposed stretches of rivers at low tide are real les-
sons in nature for the kindergarten child as he discovers these things
himself and experiments without the direction of formal lessons. If he
desires more information about things, he is free to ask the teacher;
if he does not, no pressure is put on him to learn and know.

872 The kindergarten phase is a happy one for the child. Under the
857 direction of the teacher, who may be the mother or sister of one of his
[875] peers, he passes the two hours, from 9:30 to 11:30, of the morning, then
goes on to play in and around the village for the rest of the day. He
runs home only when he is hungry or when it is mealtime. And he
hurries back to rejoin his peers for free play for the rest of the day.

857 Adults put little restriction on children's movement. They are free
[576] to occupy any part of the home and run around at will. Before enter-
[515] ing the house, everyone takes off his shoes; a rag lies on the ground to
[291] wipe dirty feet. Few children spend any length of time indoors, how-
ever, during daylight hours. If weather forces them to stay inside, they
are found either in one of the front rooms or in the cooking area to the
back.

855 Despite the occasional motor vehicle traffic through the village,
867 adults show little concern, for the kindergarten child has been well
exposed to rules of safety in this respect. At the sound of warning
horns, children run to the side of the main road and into the yards.
The few brazen little boys who dare to chase vehicles and attempt to
hang on to the rear bumper are severely reprimanded by those nearby.

A 4-year-old boy who had run out of the way of a lumbering truck
stood watching as it rounded the curve and entered the village. Adults
waiting for the vehicle to pass chatted idly and scanned the passengers
to see if there were any familiar faces. Suddenly the 4-year-old leaned
forward and threw a small branch he had in his hand under the tires
of the passing truck. At once the driver, passengers, and by-standers
screamed, "Fool one!" The passengers waved a warning finger at him,
and he was berated by the village adults standing with him. "That
was a dangerous thing to do. If you do that another time, you will be
taken to the police station!" they threatened. The boy looked down
at the ground and nodded to acknowledge his wrongdoing.

601 But it is significant that
 124 the several lists collected are identical in structure, that is, they all
 171 classify relatives in the same way. Also, everywhere some Japanese terms
 172 are replacing some Okinawan terms. I shall describe the Okinawan system un-
 changed first and then indicate what the recent changes have been.

As in many kinship systems there is a distinction between terms used primarily in referring to relatives and terms used primarily in addressing them. And as in many societies terms of address are used for all persons older than the speaker, for unrelated persons as well as for relatives. The terms that are used in reference only, never or seldom as terms of address, are terms corresponding to each of the following: parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, sibling's child (that is, meaning both "nephew" and "niece"), brother, sister, cousin. In addition there are two terms meaning "older" and "younger" and a series of terms meaning "first son", "second son", "third son", etc., which combined with the word for "woman" gives a series meaning "first daughter", "second daughter", etc. Another group of terms is used both in address and in reference, but is probably primarily terms of address; these are in address extended to non-kin, but in their basic meaning they correspond to each of the following: grandfather, grandmother, father, mother, uncle, aunt (these last two are different from those given above), older brother, older sister. To see how these terms are used let us look at each generation in turn.

The terms "grandfather" and "grandmother" are used in addressing one's parents' parents and also in addressing their brothers and sisters, that is, one's great uncles and great aunts and also non-relatives of the same generation as one's grandparents or older. (The term given above as "grandparent" is restricted to actual relatives; its basic meaning is said to be "parent's parent" but in common usage it is extended to mean ancestors above the grandparents' generation as well.) Within the brothers and sisters of one's grandparents the members of each family are further distinguished by relative age. The oldest of several brothers is "big grandfather" and the youngest "little grandfather". Women classified as "grandmothers" are similarly distinguished. These distinguishing terms may also be used in reference. Non-relatives may also be referred to by such terms as "the grandfather of such-and-such a house", using the "yagō" (house name).

The terms for relatives in the parents' generation are likewise extended. Although there are both terms of reference for uncle and aunt and terms of address, the terms "father" and "mother" are (or were) frequently used when addressing the brothers and sisters of both parents and their spouses. And as with the grandparent terms, one's father's oldest brother and mother's oldest brother are both called "big father" and their oldest sisters "big mother". The wife of a "big father" is also a "big mother" and so forth. On the other hand, a parent's youngest brother and youngest sister are called "little uncle" and "little aunt", rather than "little father" or "little mother". The terms "uncle" and "aunt" are also extended to non-kin, as polite titles of address.

(17) By combining the terms "older" and "younger" with "brother" and "sister", one can express the equivalent of the four Japanese sibling terms,

"older brother", "younger brother", "older sister", and "younger sister". But these terms are never used in address. Two unrelated terms for "older brother" and "older sister" are used in addressing older siblings and older cousins, while younger siblings and younger cousins are addressed by name. These two terms may also be politely extended to non-relatives. One's children, nephews, nieces, grandchildren, and other younger relatives are also addressed by name rather than by kinship terms. However, a younger person who is a stranger may be addressed as "older brother" or "older sister" out of courtesy. [601] [171] [182] [576]

For in-laws, there are terms of reference: husband, wife, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, and one including spouse's parents and siblings, which can be combined with other words for more specific reference. But none of these terms is used in address. Instead one uses the terms of address proper for one's spouse; the father-in-law is called "father", and so forth, at least until one has children. There is one exception; there is a separate term of address for an older brother's wife. A wife addresses her husband by the polite pronoun "you" and he addresses her by the familiar one.

All that has just been said about terms used in addressing relatives must be qualified by the statement that it is true only until one has children of his own. After the birth of the first child, or perhaps after it begins to understand speech, one begins to call his wife "mother", his father "grandfather", and so forth. He may do this in the child's absence as well. As one informant put it, the whole system shifts to make the child its center.

It will be seen that the Okinawan kinship system is bilateral, that is, it treats the father's relatives and the mother's relatives in the same way; a father's brother and a mother's brother are both "uncles". In this respect it is like the Japanese system and like our own, and unlike the Chinese system, which distinguished father's brothers and mother's brothers by separate terms. It will also be seen that like our own system the generations are clearly distinguished (in some systems relatives of different generations are lumped into the same category), but unlike our system the Okinawan system distinguishes seniors and juniors within a generation. The Japanese system distinguishes older and younger siblings of the speaker but not older and younger siblings of the speaker's parents. The Chinese system also distinguishes older and younger siblings in the speaker's generation and further distinguishes father's older and younger brothers, but lumps mother's older and younger brothers into a single separate category. What the Okinawan system does, and what makes it different from both the Japanese and the Chinese systems, is to single out the oldest in each generation while at the same time, by extending even the terms "father" and "mother" bilaterally, it suggests a unity of all those within the same generation. This accords in a general way, I believe, with the deference to seniors that is characteristic of all social relationships, with the importance of senior lines in the larger kinship groups, and with the essential unity of the local group despite its division into kin groups. [601] [171] [182]

In the last generation certain changes have occurred in the use of kinship terms widely, perhaps everywhere, on Okinawa. The Japanese terms of address, especially those for "father", "mother", "uncle", and "aunt", have begun to replace the native terms. At the same time the practice of extending [601] [171] [182]